

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PHNOM 03549 01 OF 02 131611 Z

52

ACTION AID-59

INFO OCT-01 EA-11 ADP-00 SS-15 H-02 DODE-00 SR-02 ORM-03

IO-12 PRS-01 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 NSC-10

PM-09 IGA-02 DPW-01 PA-03 USIE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00

INRE-00 RSR-01 /143 W

----- 063641

O R 131055 Z APR 73

FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 909

INFO CINCPAC

COMUSSAG

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 PHNOM PENH 3549

Z

PASS AID & DOD

E. O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: SREF, EAID, CB

SUBJ: KENNEDY HEARING

REF: STATE 068220

1. CONTINUING VISITS TO REFUGEE CAMPS, PAGODAS, AND HOSPITALS IN PHNOM PENH INDICATE NO RECENT, LARGE INFLUX OF REFUGEES FLEEING U. S. BOMBING. WE HAVE TODAY AGAIN QUERIED GKR OFFICIALS AND REPRESENTATIVES OF INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN AGENCIES ( CRS, CARE, AND IOG, WHO ASKED NOT TO BE QUOTED) AND THEY ALSO HAVE NO INDICATIONS OF SUCH AN INFLUX. SOME FAMILIES ARE REPORTED TO HAVE FLED TO PHNOM PENH FROM THE BOMBING TAKEO AND KOMPONG SPEU DURING LAST FEW WEEKS, BUT THE NUMBER APPEARS SMALL AND WE HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO LOCATE THEM FOR VERIFICATION.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 PHNOM 03549 01 OF 02 131611 Z

2. WITHIN THE LAST 2-3 WEEKS, THE NUMBER OF REFUGEES COMING TO PHNOM PENH ( FOR REASONS OTHER THAN U. S. BOMBING) HAS INCREASED RAPIDLY. DURING THE LAST SEVEN MONTHS, AN ESTIMATED 10,000 KHMER IN TAKEO HAVE FLED SOUTH INTO VIETNAM TO AVOID THE FIGHTING AND ENEMY MISTREATMENT ( SEE PARA 4). OVER 1000 OF THESE REFUGEES WERE RECENTLY TRANSPORTED BY THE GKR BACK TO PHNOM PENH. THE RECENT FIGHTING ALONG ROUTE 1 SOUTH OF PHNOM PENH HAS ALSO GENERATED A LARGE NUMBER OF REFUGEES ( ESTIMATED 5000 TO 10,000 PEOPLE), MANY OF WHOM HAVE MOVED IN WITH RELATIVES IN PHNOM PENH. FINALLY, AN UNDETERMINED NUMBER OF REFUGEES HAVE RECENTLY ARRIVED IN PHNOM PENH FROM SVAY RIENG. ACCORDING TO THOSE WHOM WE HAVE CONTACTED, THE LACK OF FOOD AND WORK IN SVAY RIENG IS SO ACUTE THAT MANY ARE FORCED TO FLY TO PHNOM PENH IN ORDER TO SURVIVE. IN THE CAMBODIAN CAMP, THE NUMBER OF REFUGEES HAS INCREASED FROM 1000 A FEW WEEKS AGO TO OVER 2500 AT THE PRESENT TIME. THE O BEKAAM CAMP EXPERIENCED A SIMILAR INCREASE. OUR BEST ESTIMATE IS THAT 5,000 TO 10,000 NEW REFUGEES HAVE RESETTLED IN PHNOM PENH IN THE LAST FEW WEEKS. THIS FIGURE IS AN ESTIMATE, HOWEVER, AND WE ARE CONTINUALLY TRYING TO MAKE IT MORE ACCURATE.

3. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT SOME NEWSPAPER REPORTERS HEARD OF THE INFLUX OF REFUGEES FROM SOUTHERN TAKEO AND MISTAKENLY ATTRIBUTED THEM TO INCREASED U. S. BOMBING IN THAT AREA. THE CONVERSATIONS OF KHMER-SPEAKING EMBASSY OFFICIALS WITH THESE REFUGEES REVEAL THAT MOST OF THEM HAD FLED INTO SOUTH VIETNAM BEFORE THE INTENSIFICATION OF U. S. BOMBING, HOWEVER.

4. THROUGHOUT THE REST OF THE REPUBLIC, THE NUMBER OF REFUGEES FLEEING FROM ENEMY CONTROLLED AREAS TO AREAS CONTROLLED BY THE GOVERNMENT HAS ALSO INCREASED RAPIDLY IN THE LAST SEVERAL MONTHS. IN THE BEGINNING OF FEBRUARY, OVER 1000 FARMERS TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY AFFORDED BY FRIENDLY MILITARY OPERATIONS TO MOVE INTO THE GOVERNMENT- CONTROLLED ENCLAVE AT SVAY RIENG. IN MAUNG DISTRICT, BATTAMBANG PROVINCE,  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 PHNOM 03549 01 OF 02 131611 Z

AN ESTIMATED 5000 TO 7,000 REFUGEES HAVE ALSO RECENT-

LY RESETTLED IN GOVERNMENT CONTROLLED AREAS.

5. IN GENERAL, THESE PEOPLE ARE FLEEING THE ENEMY-  
CONTROLLED REGIONS FOR TWO REASONS. FIRST, THE ENEMY

HAS CONFISCATED MOST OF THE RECENTLY HARVESTED RICE  
CROP AND MANY FARMERS ARE FINDING THAT  
THEY SIMPLY  
CANNOT SURVIVE. SECOND, THE ENEMY CONTINUES TO FORCEABLY  
MOVE LARGE NUMBERS OF RURAL KHMER FROM ONE AREA  
TO ANOTHER. RECENTLY ARRIVED REFUGEES FROM KAMPOT  
AND TAKEO REPORTED THAT THE ENEMY HAS BURNED A  
NUMBER OF VILLAGES AND HAMLETS AND MOVED THE ENTIRE  
POPULATION OFF TO THE MOUNTAINS AROUND CHHUK  
DISTRICT, KAMPOT. THOSE WHO DID NOT AGREE TO MOVE  
WERE SUMMARILY EXECUTED. IN BATTAMABANG, THE REFUGEES  
ALSO DESCRIBED SIMILAR MASS DEPORTATIONS BY THE  
ENEMY. IN SVAY RIENG, ONE RECENT RETURNEE TOLD AN  
EMBASSY OFFICIAL HOW HE AND 50 OTHER KHMERS WERE  
FORCED TO MARCH ALL THE WAY TO KRATIE PROVINCE IN  
ORDER TO SUPPORT THE LOCAL ENEMY GARRISON. AN  
INCREASING NUMBER OF KHMERS IN ENEMY TERRITORY,  
FACED WITH THE THREAT OF DEPORTATION OF UNKNOWN,  
HOSTILE LANDS, ARE CHOOSING TO ABANDON THEIR FARMS  
AND THEIR LIVELIHOODS AND FLEE TO GOVERNMENT CONTROL.

CONFIDENTIAL

ADP000

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PHNOM 03549 02 OF 02 131522 Z

43

ACTION AID-59

INFO OCT-01 EA-11 ADP-00 SS-15 H-02 DODE-00 SR-02 ORM-03

IO-12 PRS-01 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 NSC-10

PM-09 IGA-02 DPW-01 PA-03 USIE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00

INRE-00 RSR-01 /143 W

----- 063124

O R 131055 Z APR 73

FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0910

INFO CINCPAC

COMUSSAG

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK  
AMEMBASSY SAIGON

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 PHNOM PENH 3549

6. THOUGH THE NUMBER OF REFUGEES IN PHNOM PENH WHO HAVE FLED U. S. BOMBING IS TO ALL APPEARANCE QUITE SMALL, WE CONTINUE TO HEAR REPORTS OF CIVILIANS KILLED BY B52 STRIKES. ALL OF THESE REPORTS ARE SECOND- HAND, HOWEVER, AND WE HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO LOCATE ANYBODY WHO ACTUALLY HAS WITNESSED CIVILIAN CASUALTIES. IF THERE HAVE BEEN CIVILIANS KILLED, HOWEVER, THE ENEMY'S PROGRAM OF MASS DEPORTATION IS PROBABLY PRIMARILY RESPONSIBLE. BY FORCING THESE PEOPLE TO LIVE WITH AND SUPPORT THEIR TROOPS, THE ENEMY HAS DELIBERATELY EXPOSED THEM TO AIR ATTACKS AGAINST LEGITIMATE MILITARY TARGETS.

7. RECENT CONVERSATIONS WITH REFUGEES CAST SOME LIGHT ON WHY WE CONTINUE TO HEAR OF LARGE NUMBERS OF CIVILIAN CASUALTIES CAUSED BY U. S. BOMBING BUT ARE UNABLE TO LOCATE ANY REFUGEES WHO HAVE SEEN THE B52 RAIDS FIRST HAND. ONE EXPLANATION IS THAT THE ENEMY WILL NOT ALLOW ANY KHMER TO LEAVE ENEMY CONTROLLED AREAS, EVEN AFTER HEAVY AIR STRIKES .  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 PHNOM 03549 02 OF 02 131522 Z

OF ALL THE REFUGEES THE EMBASSY HAS CONTACTED IN PHNOM PENH, NONE HAS FLED FROM THE ENEMY CONTROLLED AREAS IN TAKEO, KANDAL, KAMPOT OR KOMPONG SPEU. (FOR SOME REASON, REFUGEES HAVE HAD AN EASIER TIME LEAVING ENEMY CONTROLLED ZONES IN SVAY RIENG AND BATTAMBANG.) ANOTHER QUITE DIFFERENT EXPLANATION IS THAT THE ENEMY HAS CONSCIOUSLY BEEN TRYING TO SPREAD RUMORS OF LARGE NUMBERS OF CIVILIAN KILLED WHEN IN FACT, THE NUMBER HAS BEEN QUITE SMALL. A KHMER- SPEAKING EMBASSY OFFICIAL RAN INTO THIS WHEN TALKING TO A REFUGEE FROM KOMPONG SPEU. THOUGH HER HAMLET HAS NOT BEEN BOMBED, AIR STRIKES HAD HIT THE AREA NEARBY. SHE WAS CONVINCED THAT THESE STRIKES HAD KILLED HUNDREDS AND DESTROYED THREE COMPLETE HAMLETS. WHEN ASKED WHERE SHE HAD LEARNED THIS, SHE REPLIED THAT THE ENEMY ALLOWED ONLY A FEW SELECT PEOPLE TO TRAVEL FREELY BETWEEN THE VARIOUS HAMLETS AND THAT ONE OF THESE PEOPLE HAD TOLD HER. IT IS POSSIBLE, THEN, THAT THE ENEMY HAD BEEN USING THESE PEOPLE TO SPREAD RUMORS ABOUT THE DESTRUCTION CAUSED BY THE AIR STRIKES WHICH HAD NO BASIS IN REALITY. BOTH OF THE ABOVE EXPLANATIONS APPEAR TO BE QUITE PLAUSIBLE.

8. WE WILL CONTINUE TO SEEK FURTHER INFORMATION ON  
THIS MATTER.  
SWANK

CONFIDENTIAL

\*\*\* Current Handling Restrictions \*\*\* n/a

\*\*\* Current Classification \*\*\* CONFIDENTIAL

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:**  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 13 APR 1973  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** garlanwa  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1973PHNOM03549  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GDS  
**Errors:** n/a  
**Film Number:** n/a  
**From:** PHNOM PENH  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1973/newtext/t19730442/aaaainjb.tel  
**Line Count:** 231  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE  
**Office:** ACTION AID  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 5  
**Previous Channel Indicators:**  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** 73 STATE 068220  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** garlanwa  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 20 NOV 2001  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <20-Nov-2001 by cunninfx>; APPROVED <13-Dec-2001 by garlanwa>  
**Review Markings:**

Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
30 JUN 2005

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** <DBA CORRECTED> jms 980114  
**Subject:** KENNEDY HEARING  
**TAGS:** EAID, SREF, CB  
**To:** AID  
BANGKOK  
CINCPAC  
COMUSSAG  
SAIGON  
SECSTATE WASHDC  
VIENTIANE

**Type:** TE

**Markings:** Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005